

Go and Tell My Child to Let Me Go

Blondella James Brown

ReadersMagnet

(204pp)

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Part memoir, part faith-based guide, Go and Tell My Child to Let Me Go is an informative book that empowers incarcerated people and their families.

Blondella James Brown draws upon her personal experiences to inspire hope in parents and families with incarcerated loved ones in her uplifting Christian guide *Go and Tell My Child to Let Me Go*.

Brown was plagued by shame and guilt when her son was first incarcerated. Among the lessons she shares from her prison ministry and as a parent with an imprisoned child are the value of self-forgiveness and of forgiving one's child. Her book also examines the effects of fear and worry, explaining how to fight both through faith. It encourages parents to remain involved with their imprisoned children and addresses recidivism and the necessity of rehabilitating ex-offenders. And though it recognizes that parents may not be responsible for the incarceration of their children, for those whose actions may have contributed to their children's imprisonment, it offers the support of applicable biblical passages about letting go of the past, rising up and moving forward, and owning one's past parenting mistakes in order to forgive oneself. Brown also discusses how parent-child relationships can be restored through self-reflection and forgiveness, taking a compassionate approach that uplifts and invites connections.

Elsewhere, there are practical tips and advice about what a parent should do or not do following their child's imprisonment: information on what to expect during visits, a forewarning about not placing oneself under financial strain to support a loved one, and advice about continuing to pursue spiritual growth and not abandon one's other responsibilities are included. There's also helpful information about prison ministries, their functions, and what they involve.

When addressing offenders themselves, the book urges the recognition of the pain they have caused so that people can turn their lives around. It supports these encouragements with the testimonies of ex-offenders, as with a former alcoholic and drug addict who spent five years behind bars but who had a spiritual awakening later and is now a volunteer in a prison ministry. These demonstrations of real change further reiterate the idea that transformation is possible—a notion complemented by discussions of how offenders can change, reintegrate into society, and lead meaningful lives. Brown suggests step-by-step strategies for getting there, from acknowledging what one has done to working toward becoming better; forgiving oneself and others; and refusing to give up in order to achieve gradual, long-term spiritual growth.

Part memoir, part faith-based guide, *Go and Tell My Child to Let Me Go* is an informative book that empowers incarcerated people to change and helps their parents to find freedom from guilt and shame.

EDITH WAIRIMU (December 29, 2022)

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